



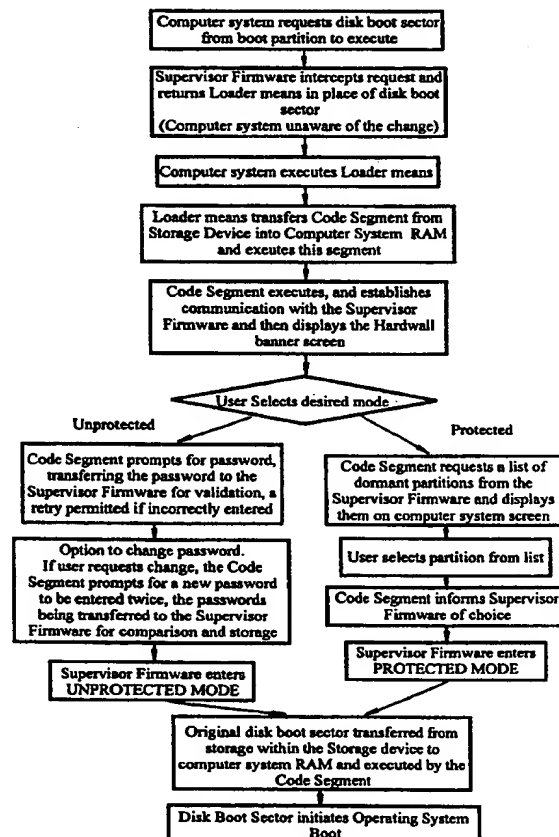
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(54) Title: PROTECTED STORAGE DEVICE FOR COMPUTER SYSTEM

## (57) Abstract

The invention is a storage device (1) for a host computer system. The device (1) incorporates a Supervisor function for controlling access to information stored in a storage medium (2) of the device. The main embodiment described is a hard disk drive (1) comprising: one or more disk platters (2) for storing information; a ROM (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the drive; a volatile RAM (5); a micro-controller (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the disk platter(s) (2); and an interface (6) for interfacing the drive (1) with the host computer system and via which information is transferred to and from the disk platter(s) (2) under the control of the micro-controller (7). A Supervisor is provided in the form of firmware which is preferably stored in the ROM (4), the Supervisor operating the micro-controller (7) so as to protect information stored on the disk platter(s).



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PROTECTED STORAGE DEVICE FOR COMPUTER SYSTEM

The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for  
controlling access to and corruption of information in a  
5 computer system.

US 5,657,473 discloses a method and apparatus particularly  
concerned with the detection and containment of hostile  
programs such as "virus" programs within computer systems,  
10 said method including dividing the information stored on the  
storage medium into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions,  
including a boot partition and a plurality of general  
partitions, each of the partitions being further divided into  
a plurality of sectors, any designated subset of the general  
15 partitions being active at any given time when the computer  
system is in use,  
said invention employing a supervising means (a Supervisor)  
separate of the central processing unit (CPU)  
allowing/restricting/prohibiting read/write operations upon  
20 the storage medium depending on whether information to be read  
from a sector or written to a sector is in the boot partition,  
or in a general partition, and whether the partition is active  
or inactive, and  
said supervising means also allowing a format operation only  
25 on a partition which is active and prohibiting a format  
operation on the boot partition, or on a general partition if  
it is inactive.

The described invention preferably uses a second processor  
30 which is made inaccessible to the user and to the virus,  
supervising all data transfers between and within sub-  
divisions of the device or devices placed under its control.

The Patent Application describes, as an example, an embodiment  
35 comprising a printed circuit board assembly containing a

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dedicated micro-controller, used in place of the hard disk controller within the computer system.

EP 0 800 135 A1 discloses a method and apparatus for  
5 controlling access to and modification of information stored  
on a storage medium forming part of a computer system,  
said invention including by reference all aspects of the  
aforesaid invention of US 5,657,473,  
said invention designating at least one partition a Write Many  
10 Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write  
command is issued to overwrite any resident information stored  
in a/the WMR partition by updated information, the updated  
information is written on the storage medium in a location  
other than where any resident information is stored and a  
15 pointer to the updated information is stored in a Sector  
Relocation Table (SRT) so that the updated information can be  
accessed, as required during the remainder of a (user)  
session. An alternative method is also described wherein, if a  
write command is issued to overwrite any resident information  
20 stored in a/the WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write  
command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the  
storage medium to be copied back to said WMR partition when  
required. This could be implemented, for example, by a system  
reset.

25

The application describes, as an example, an embodiment  
comprising a printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) containing  
a dedicated micro-controller placed in-line between the  
computer system hard disk drive controller (often embedded  
30 within the computer system motherboard) and the hard disk  
drive.

The method and apparatus in the aforementioned inventions  
propose the use of a second processor separate from the  
35 computer system central processing unit (CPU). Although the  
aforesaid inventions do not specifically limit their scope to

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combined hardware and firmware embodiments, both describe in detail embodiments which include a separate printed circuit board assembly, placed between the CPU and the storage medium.

Such hardware embodiments have the following disadvantages:

5 Such hardware embodiments have an associated cost per unit, which results in a base cost for the invention which must be met irrespective of sales volume;

Such hardware embodiments must be installed within the computer system, generally requiring the computer system case  
10 to be removed;

Such hardware embodiments require safety and emission approvals and require a high level of testing to ensure compatibility across the wide spectrum of existing computer systems;

15 Such hardware embodiments are subject to a level of component failures.

It is the subject of the present invention to avoid or minimise one or more of the aforesaid disadvantages. This  
20 document discloses a method (and related apparatus for) incorporating the methods outlined in both US 5,657,473 and EP 0 800 135 A1 into the storage device itself.

Storage devices are frequently intelligent containing their  
25 own processor module, this being a potential candidate to undertake the functions of a Supervisor as described within the aforesaid inventions. This intelligent module controls the transfer of information to and from the storage medium via the interface to the computer system. According to the present  
30 invention as defined herebelow, this intelligent module is used to allow/restrict/prohibit, read/write operations upon the storage medium in a manner consistent with the aforesaid inventions.

35 According to a first aspect of the invention we provide a storage device for a host computer system, the storage device

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comprising: storage means for storing information; intelligent means for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means; and interfacing means for interfacing the storage device with the host computer system and via which  
5 information is transferred to and from the storage means under the control of said intelligent means,  
the storage means comprising: a storage medium divided into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions; non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means for storing firmware for controlling  
10 operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means;  
wherein supervising means is incorporated in said storage means for operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium.

15

The term "information" as used herein is intended to cover information, data and/or program code, any or all of which may be stored in the storage means.

20 The supervising means ("Supervisor") preferably protects the said information by controlling access to and modification thereof in accordance with pre-programmed protection criteria.

Incorporating the Supervisor within the storage device has the  
25 following advantages:

where an intelligent means is already present on the storage device, the methods outlined in the aforesaid inventions may be implemented with no hardware changes to the storage device; physical installation of a separate PCBA containing the  
30 Supervisor is no longer required; Supervisor firmware may be included within the storage device during manufacture or may be added by means of a software utility;  
since a separate PCBA is no longer required, manufacturing costs are significantly reduced by removing the requirement  
35 for additional hardware components and no additional safety or

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emission testing is required over and above that required for the storage device without Supervisor firmware; by removing the requirement for additional circuitry external to the storage device, there is a reduction in the  
5 compatibility issues that may arise from the diversity of computer systems and storage device combinations which are possible.

A further advantage is that by incorporating the Supervisor in  
10 the storage device, rather than in additional hardware, this allows the Supervisor to be implemented in laptop, notebook and/or other small portable computers since there is no extra space required for such additional hardware.

15 In prior art systems in which the Supervisor was provided as additional hardware located between the storage device and the host CPU, one problem was that the computer system could potentially be tampered with so as to remove this additional hardware, in order to make the computer system operate as  
20 normal, without the Supervisor. A further advantage of the present invention is that by incorporating the Supervisor within the storage device, the Supervisor cannot be removed without removing and/or tampering with the storage device itself.

25

A further significant advantage of the present invention is that whereas in the prior art system the Supervisor hardware was located on the interface between the storage device and the host CPU, and therefore changes in this interface (e.g. an  
30 increase or change in data flows across the interface) required reconfiguration and/or adjustment of data handling by the Supervisor, in the present invention the Supervisor is independent of such interface changes by virtue of being incorporated in the storage device itself. Interface changes  
35 thus do not affect the Supervisor.

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The storage device may be a hard disk drive. The storage medium may comprise one or more disk platters. The supervising means is preferably provided as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM on the storage device. It will be appreciated that if an unauthorised user were to attempt to remove the Supervisor by removing the ROM, this will render the storage device inoperative.

The intelligent means preferably comprises a processor, often referred to as a micro-controller, which runs the Supervisor firmware stored in the ROM means. Hard disk drives are now available which incorporate a printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) including a micro-controller for running programs stored in memory means provided on the PCBA. In such drives, this processor means may conveniently function as the micro-controller for use in the present invention. The Supervisor firmware can be stored in non-volatile ROM provided on the PCBA.

Said non-overlapping partitions into which the storage medium is divided preferably include a boot partition and at least one general partition, each said partition being divided into a plurality of sectors. The storage medium may have a plurality of general partitions defined thereon, any designated subset of which are active at any given time, in use of the computer system.

Preferably, the supervising means operates said intelligent means so as to allow/restrict/prohibit read/write operations upon the storage medium depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive. The supervising means may also allow a format operation only on a general partition which is active and



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prohibit a format operation on the boot partition or on a general partition which is inactive. The supervising means preferably also monitors commands passing through the interfacing means between the storage device and the host computer system and prevents predetermined potentially disruptive interface commands from being implemented. For example, the supervising means may prevent disruptive Vendor Unique Commands or Format Track commands from being carried out.

10

It will be appreciated that the supervising means preferably also ensures that firmware stored on the ROM means of the storage device, which includes the firmware providing the supervisor means, is also protected in that a user, or a user program operating in the host computer system, does not have access to the ROM means (or the RAM means) of the storage device itself and any firmware or other code stored therein is thus unalterable by the user or user program.

20 Optionally, the supervising means may cause a warning to be issued to the user should an attempt be made to perform a prohibited read, write or format operation.

At least one of said partitions of the storage device may comprise a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite (i.e. update) any information stored in the WMR partition the updated information is stored elsewhere on the storage medium, preferably in a dedicated area of the storage medium, and a pointer to the updated information is provided so the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of the session, wherein a system reset causes the list of pointers to the updated information, and optionally the updated information itself, to be cleared.

35

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Where such a WMR partition is provided, the or each said WMR partition preferably has a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) associated therewith which is held in said volatile RAM means of the storage device, each entry in a said SRT is a pointer  
5 which defines the address of a range of sectors in the WMR partition that have been updated and an address where the updated information is located, this location being within a dedicated area on the storage medium which is accessed only by the supervisor means.

10

Alternatively, at least one of said partitions of the storage device comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite (i.e. update) any information stored in a/the WMR partition  
15 prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium to be copied back to said WMR partition when required. This could be implemented, for example, by a system reset.

20 Where the storage medium comprises at least one disk platter and a boot partition, said boot partition will include a disk boot sector. According to the present invention, the storage device may be provided with loader means and said supervising means may be adapted to intercept any request for the disk  
25 boot sector, issued by the host computer system in use thereof, and supply said loader means to satisfy the request. The loader means is preferably configured to load or transfer a predetermined code segment, which is stored on the storage means, to a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer  
30 system to be executed by the computer system prior to (normal) operating system boot. This code segment may provide user prompts, and communication with the supervising means. The loader means is preferably provided in said non-volatile ROM of the storage device. Alternatively, said loader means  
35 may be provided in a reserved area on the storage medium, for example in one or more reserved tracks of a said disk platter

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of the storage device. This reserved area is preferably inaccessible to a user or user program (but is accessible to the Supervising means) whereby unauthorised alteration of the loader means is prevented.

5

The code segment may be provided in said non-volatile ROM means of the storage device or, preferably, in a reserved area of the storage medium which is also preferably inaccessible to a user or user program, but is accessible to the Supervising  
10 means, whereby unauthorised alteration of the code segment is prevented.

Optionally, the storage device may be placed in either "supervised" mode, in which the supervising means is active,  
15 or "unsupervised" mode in which the supervising means is not active. Said code segment, when executed, preferably provides user prompts which allow a user to select either "supervised" mode, or by entry of a password select "unsupervised" mode. The code segment is preferably constructed such that,  
20 subsequent to mode selection by the user, the code segment transfers and executes the boot program from the disk boot sector of the storage medium which, in turn, initiates operating system boot (in the host computer system) The correct password (for comparison against a password input by a  
25 user) may be stored in said non-volatile ROM of the storage device or on the storage medium itself.

According to a second aspect of the invention we provide a computer system incorporating a storage device according to  
30 the above-described first aspect of the invention.

According to a third aspect of the invention we provide a method of controlling access to and modification of information stored on a storage medium of a storage device for  
35 incorporation in a host computer system wherein the storage device comprises storage means for storing information,

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- intelligent means for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means, and interfacing means for interfacing the storage device with the host computer system and via which information may be transferred to and from the
- 5 storage means under the control of said intelligent means, and the storage means comprises: a storage medium; non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means;
- 10 the method comprising the steps of:
- dividing the storage medium into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions including a boot partition and at least one general partition, and dividing each said partition into a plurality of sectors;
- 15 providing supervising means in said storage means for operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium; and
- incorporating the storage device in a host computer system, and running the host computer system with the supervising
- 20 means operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium.

Preferably said supervising means is provided for allowing/restricting/prohibiting read/write operations upon

25 the storage medium depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or

30 inactive,

said supervising means optionally also allowing a format operation only on a general partition which is active and prohibiting a format operation on the boot partition or on a general partition which is inactive,

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said supervising means being adapted to intercept each interface request from the host computer system to said storage device,  
and the supervising means, preferably, causing a warning to be  
5 issued to the user should an attempt be made to perform a prohibited read, write or format operation which operation is prevented by the supervising means;  
providing a loader means, said supervising means being adapted to supply said loader means in response to any request, issued  
10 by the host computer system, for the disk boot sector of the boot partition; and executing the loader means by the central processing unit (CPU) of the computer system in place of the requested disk boot sector, the loader sector transferring a code segment stored in the storage device, preferably in the  
15 storage medium thereof, into a RAM of the CPU for execution thereon, the code segment, when executed, initiating a user interface procedure, preferably in the form of user prompts, whereby a user may select one or more protection options;  
and whereupon, subsequent to a said selection having been made  
20 by the user, said code segment transfers the disk boot program stored in the disk boot sector as originally requested and, in turn, executes the disk boot program which then initiates operating system boot (in the host computer system).

25 Said selection of protection options preferably includes the option, by entering a predetermined password, of setting the storage device in "unsupervised mode" whereby interface requests are not intercepted by the supervising means. The selection may also include the option of setting the storage  
30 device in "supervised" mode and further selecting one or more active partitions and/or of designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any resident information stored in a/the WMR partition by updated  
35 information, the updated information is written on the storage medium in a location other than where any resident information

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is stored and a pointer to the updated information is provided so that the updated information can be accessed, as required during the remainder of a session.

- 5 The method may further include storing a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) which contains the pointers associated with each said WMR partition in the volatile RAM means of the storage device.
- 10 Alternatively, the method may include the option of designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite (i.e. update) any information stored in a/the WMR partition prior to undertaking said write
- 15 command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium to be copied back to said WMR partition when required. This could be implemented, for example, by a system reset.
- 20 Preferred embodiments of the invention will now be described by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-
- Fig 1 is a schematic diagram of a hard disk drive according to one embodiment of the invention;
- 25 Fig.2 is a flow chart illustrating a modified operating boot sequence implemented in the hard disk drive of Fig.1.

Fig.1 shows a storage device in the form of a hard disk drive 1 for incorporating in a host computer system (not shown). The

30 drive is of conventional form having one or more disk platters 2 mounted on a spindle motor drive mechanism on a printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) 3 having a ROM chip 4 containing firmware for controlling operation of the drive, and a RAM chip 5. The drive has an interface connector 6 which enables

35 interfacing of the disk drive 1 to the host computer system, via which interface connector information, including user

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information, operating system information, data and other programs, is transferred to and from the disk platter(s) 2. The PCBA 3 has a micro-controller 7 provided thereon which runs the firmware contained in the ROM chip 4, accesses the 5 RAM chip 5 and controls the transfer of information, data and/or programs to and from the disk platter(s) via the interface.

The firmware in the ROM includes "Supervisor" firmware for 10 intercepting and validating each request to the hard disk (from the host computer system) in a manner previously described in US 5,657,473, the contents of which are therefore incorporated herein by reference. The operation of the disk drive beneficially also includes a method of controlling 15 access to and modification of information stored on the disk platter(s) of the drive utilising a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition (or partitions) as previously disclosed in EP 0 800 135 A1, the content of which is also therefore incorporated herein by reference.

20

Thus, the supervising means (Supervisor) forms part of the hard drive itself, separate of a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer system and inaccessible to the user, the supervising means controlling access to information stored on 25 the disk platter(s).

According to the described embodiment, the disk drive operation provides a method giving the user the capability of selecting either an "unsupervised" or "unprotected" mode 30 through entry of a password, or selecting a "supervised" or "protected" mode with further selection of one or more active partitions. To do this, a loader means in the form of a "loader sector" is provided in the form of executable code stored in the non-volatile ROM chip 4, the loader sector 35 acting as a replacement for the disk boot sector of the active partition on the storage device, whereby each request (by the

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host computer system) for said disk boot sector is intercepted by the Supervisor and said loader sector is supplied to satisfy the request, the loader sector being executed by the CPU of the computer system in place of the requested disk boot sector, said loader sector transferring a code segment (stored on a reserved track therefor on the disk platter(s) and referred to in further detail below) into RAM of the CPU of the host computer system for execution thereby; said code segment when executed, providing all required user prompts and communication with the Supervisor required for entry into either "protected" or "unprotected" mode, such that, subsequent to mode selection, said code segment executes the original disk boot sector program which then initiates the process of operating system boot. This modified operating system boot operation will now be explained in further detail with reference to Fig.2 of the drawings which is a flow chart illustrating this operating system boot sequence.

In the normal operation of a computer system, upon switch on of the system (or a request to re-boot the system) the host system central processing unit (CPU) requests the disk boot sector from the boot partition of a disk platter of the hard drive. In the present invention, the Supervisor intercepts any request for the disk boot sector. Upon interception of the disk boot sector request, the Supervisor returns the loader means (namely the "loader sector") stored in the ROM chip 4 in place of the disk boot sector. The host system will be unaware of this change having been made and will execute the loader sector which, in turn, transfers a code segment, stored in the storage device, to a RAM in the host computer system. This code segment is stored in a track 8 on the disk platter (or one of the disk platters) which is reserved therefor. This track is accessible only to the Supervisor means, being a track which is outside the area of the disk platter accessible to the host operating system.



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The code segment contains code, to be executed by the host system, which issues user prompts and which communicates with the Supervisor, in order to enable the user to set the system in the "protected" mode or "unprotected" mode, as will be described herebelow.

Once the code segment has been transferred to the RAM of the host computer system it is executed thereby so as to, firstly, establish communication with the Supervisor, and then provide a user display screen (known as the HARDWALL banner - HARDWALL is a registered trade mark of Vircon Limited) which permits the user to select a desired protection mode, namely either "protected" or "unprotected". If the user selects the "protected" mode the code segment then requests a list of dormant partitions from the Supervisor and displays them on the screen of the computer system and prompts the user to select one or more partitions from the list. Once the user has selected one or more partitions the code segment informs the Supervisor of this choice. Prior to selecting a partition or partitions, which then become active, the system will previously have been configured in terms of partitions and a level of protection associated with them. These may be established by means of a software utility. In general, there are three types of partition, namely general partitions, read-only partitions and WMR partitions. Typically, a read-only partition and a WMR partition are always available. At the start of a session, when a general partition (or partitions) is selected and made active it is granted full read/write access. The remaining general partitions then become dormant whereby the Supervisor prevents their contents being accessed and hence protects them during that particular user session (which lasts until switch-off or re-boot of the computer system). Read-only partitions are granted read access only, all write commands being prohibited by the Supervisor. The function and features of the Supervisor are disclosed and

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described in detail in US 5,657,473 (incorporated herein by reference) and will therefore not be repeated here.

In the preferred embodiment, at the stage of the process where  
5 the user selects one or more active partitions, the executed  
code segment will make available to the user one or more  
partitions designated as Write-Many-Recoverable (WMR)  
partitions. If a write command is issued by the host system  
(e.g. by a user program) to overwrite any resident information  
10 stored in that WMR partition, the updated information is  
stored elsewhere on the disk platter(s) in a dedicated area  
thereof, and a pointer to the updated information is kept (in  
the RAM chip 5 of the drive) so the updated information can be  
accessed as required during the remainder of the session, and  
15 wherein a system reset causes the list of pointers to the  
updated information, and optionally also the updated  
information itself, to be cleared. Each WMR partition has a  
Sector Relocation Table (SRT) associated with it containing  
the pointers which define the address of a range of sectors in  
20 the WMR partition which have been updated and an address where  
the updated information is located. This updated information  
is located in a dedicated area of the disk platter(s) which is  
accessible only to, and is protected by, the Supervisor. This  
may be achieved by the dedicated area being disposed in an  
25 area of the disk platter(s) to which any access by the host  
system is denied by the Supervisor, the dedicated area in this  
manner being effectively "hidden" from the host system.  
Alternatively, the dedicated area could be disposed outside  
the physical area (namely tracks) of the disk platter(s) which  
30 is accessible to the host operating system, in an area which  
is accessible only to the Supervisor. The SRT table(s) are  
stored in the RAM chip 5 of the disk drive 1. The details and  
implementation of the WMR technique are disclosed and  
described in detail in EP 0 800 135 A1, previously referred to  
35 and incorporated herein by reference, and are therefore not  
described in any further detail herein. It will be appreciated

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that the WMR facility enables a user to write to the designated WMR partition(s) during a session on the computer system, but each time the computer system is re-booted all changes are erased so as to leave each WMR partition in its original state. Typically, the boot partition will be chosen by the user to be designated a WMR partition.

In an alternative WMR technique, also described in EP 0 800 135 A1, if a partition is designated as WMR, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite (i.e. update) any information stored in a/the WMR partition prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium to be copied back to said WMR partition when required. This could be implemented, for example, by a system reset. For the avoidance of doubt, the use of this alternative WMR method is also intended to be within the scope of the present invention.

The RAM chip 5 is also used to store information regarding the protection state attributed to each partition in the drive at any given time, for example which partitions are active and which are inactive, which are WMR partitions, which are read/write accessible, which are read-only, etc. This information, which can be referred to as a Permission Table, is also stored in the RAM chip 5 of the disk drive 1.

Once the active partition(s) have been selected, and any WMR partitions, the code segment transfers the original disk boot sector stored in the disk drive to the host computer system RAM for execution thereby, the executed disk boot sector initiating operating system boot in the host system.

If, at the stage where the user is prompted to select "protected" or "unprotected" mode (i.e. "supervised" or "unsupervised"), the user selects "unprotected", the code segment prompts the user to enter a password. The password

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entered by the user is then transferred to the Supervisor firmware for validation thereby (by matching it against a correct password stored in the ROM chip 4 of the drive 1). A limited number of retries is permitted if the user enters an  
5 incorrect password. Once a correct password has been entered and validated, the code segment provides the user with the option of requesting to change the password. If such a request is made, the code segment prompts for a new password to be entered twice, the two entered passwords then being  
10 transferred to the Supervisor firmware for comparison and storage (in the ROM chip 4 of the drive). The Supervisor then enters the "unprotected" or "unsupervised" mode and the code segment proceeds to transfer the original disk boot sector to the host system RAM for execution thereby in order to initiate  
15 operating system boot in the host system.

A more detailed description of the above-described embodiment is not given herein, as this would be within the normal understanding of a person skilled in the art.

20

The embodiment of the present invention includes no physical electronic components that are not present in many commercially available hard disk drives. The invention requires only the following features in the disk drive in  
25 order to implement the invention thereon:  
memory locations within the Read Only Memory (ROM) chip 4 to contain the firmware code to implement Supervisor functionality (the Supervisor firmware);  
integration of the Supervisor firmware into the existing  
30 control firmware of the hard disk drive, ensuring that no interface request is serviced before the Supervisor firmware has checked and validated the request;  
memory locations with the embedded Random Access Memory (RAM) 5 of the hard disk drive to store the SRT and Permission Table  
35 which are created and maintained during each session on the computer system;

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memory locations within the ROM for the storage of the password for use in selecting supervised or unsupervised mode; memory locations within the ROM 4 for the storage of the loader sector;

5 sectors on the hard disk drive itself for storage of the code segment which is required to be passed to the computer system and executed during the initial power up and configuration process, said sectors being within one or more reserved tracks on the disk surface which are inaccessible to the host  
10 computer system (and any user programs running therein) and accessible only to the Supervisor.

It should be noted that the Supervisor firmware is configured to prohibit any access to itself, or alteration to itself, by  
15 user commands (issued by a user or user program) which attempt to read, corrupt or modify the Supervisor firmware.

It will be appreciated that, as an alternative to providing the invention in the drive at manufacture thereof, where a  
20 hard drive having the necessary features outlined immediately above is provided, the invention could be implemented by loading the Supervisor firmware into the disk drive by means of a software utility program in order to obtain a disk drive which operates in accordance with the present invention.  
25 Although the Supervisor firmware will preferably be loaded into the ROM of the drive, it is envisaged that some or all of the Supervisor firmware could be written onto the disk platter(s). In this latter case, any of the Supervisor firmware which is stored on the disk platter(s) will be  
30 protected by the Supervisor itself so that a user or user program cannot gain read or write access thereto.

The embodiments of the present invention hereinbefore described are given by way of example only, and it will be  
35 appreciated that various modifications thereto will be possible without departing from the scope of the invention. In

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particular, the invention is applicable not only to storage devices in the form of hard disk drives, but also to other types of storage device. For example, the Supervisor firmware could be incorporated in a solid state storage device, such as  
5 a FLASH memory card. Also, the Supervisor firmware could be stored on an optical storage medium, such as a compact disc (CD) or digital video disk (DVD), for use in an optical storage device, e.g. CD or DVD drive. Equally, some or all of the Supervisor firmware could be stored in the ROM of a CD or  
10 DVD drive.

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CLAIMS

1. A storage device (1) for a host computer system, the storage device comprising: storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing  
5 information; intelligent means (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means; and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device with the host computer system and via which information is transferred to and from the storage means under the control of  
10 said intelligent means,  
the storage means comprising: a storage medium (2) divided into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions; non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile  
15 random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);  
wherein supervising means is incorporated in said storage means for operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2).
- 20 2. A storage device according to claim 1, wherein the supervising means is provided as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM means (4) on the storage device (1).
3. A storage device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  
25 the intelligent means comprises a micro-controller (7) which runs the Supervisor firmware stored in the ROM means (4).
4. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein said non-overlapping partitions into which the storage medium  
30 (2) is divided include a boot partition and at least one general partition, each said partition being divided into a plurality of sectors.
5. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein  
35 the supervising means operates said intelligent means (7) so as to allow/restrict/prohibit read/write operations upon the

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storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition, and whether if the  
5 partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive.

6. A storage device according to claim 5, as dependent from claim 2, wherein the supervising means also ensures that  
10 firmware stored on the ROM means (4) of the storage device (1), which includes the firmware providing the supervisor means, is also protected in that a user, or a user program operating in the host computer system, does not have access to the ROM means (4) of the storage device itself.

15

7. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the supervising means is configured so as to cause a warning to be issued to the user should an attempt be made to perform a prohibited read, write or format operation.

20

8. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any information  
25 stored in the WMR partition the updated information is stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2), and a pointer to the updated information is provided so the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of the session, and wherein a system reset causes the pointer to the updated  
30 information to be cleared.

9. A storage device according to claim 8, wherein the or each said WMR partition has a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) associated therewith which is held in said volatile RAM means  
35 (5) of the storage device (1), and each entry in a said SRT is a pointer which defines the address of a range of sectors in



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the WMR partition that have been updated and an address where the updated information is located, this location being within a dedicated area on the storage medium (2) which is accessed only by the supervisor means.

5

10. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 7, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any  
10 information stored in said at least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition when required.

15 11. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the storage device (1) is provided with loader means and said supervising means is adapted to intercept any request for the disk boot sector, issued by the host computer system in use thereof, and supply said loader means to satisfy the request.

20

12. A storage device according to claim 11, wherein the loader means is configured to load or transfer a predetermined code segment, which is stored on the storage means (2), to a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer system to  
25 be executed by the computer system prior to operating system boot.

13. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein the loader means is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the  
30 storage device (1).

14. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein said loader means is provided in a reserved area on the storage medium (2), which reserved area is inaccessible to a user or  
35 user program.

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15. A storage device according to any of claims 12 to 14, wherein the code segment is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the storage device.

5 16. A storage device according to any of claims 12 to 14, wherein the code segment is provided in a reserved area of the storage medium (2) which is inaccessible to a user or user program, but is accessible to the supervising means, whereby unauthorised alteration of the code segment is prevented.

10

17. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the device may be placed in either "supervised" mode, in which the supervising means is active, or "unsupervised" mode in which the supervising means is not active.

15

18. A storage device according to claim 17, wherein said code segment, when executed, provides user prompts which allow a user to select either "supervised" mode, or by entry of a password select "unsupervised" mode, and the code segment is  
20 constructed such that, subsequent to mode selection by the user, the code segment transfers and executes the boot program from the disk boot sector of the storage medium (2) which, in turn, initiates operating system boot in the host computer system.

25 19. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein said storage device is a hard disk drive and the storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2), and said loader means is provided in at least one in one reserved track of said at least one disk platter (2).

30

20. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is a hard disk drive (1).

21. A storage device according to claim 20, wherein the  
35 storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2).

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22. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is a solid state storage device.

23. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is an optical storage device.

24. A computer system incorporating a storage (1) device according to any of claims 1 to 23.

10 25. A method of controlling access to and modification of information stored on a storage medium (2) of a storage device (1) for incorporation in a host computer system wherein the storage device comprises storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing information, intelligent means (7) for controlling the  
15 transfer of information to and from the storage means, and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device (1) with the host computer system and via which information may be transferred to and from the storage means under the control of said intelligent means, and the storage means comprises: a  
20 storage medium (2); non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);

the method comprising the steps of:

25 dividing the storage medium (2) into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions including a boot partition and at least one general partition, and dividing each said partition into a plurality of sectors;

providing supervising means in said storage means for  
30 operating said intelligent means (7) so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2); and incorporating the storage device in a host computer system, and running the host computer system with the supervising means operating said intelligent means so as to protect  
35 information stored in the storage medium.

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26. A method according to claim 25, wherein said supervising means is provided for allowing/restricting/prohibiting read/write operations upon the storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition, and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive, said supervising means being adapted to intercept each interface request from the host computer system to said storage device (1); providing a loader means, said supervising means being adapted to supply said loader means in response to any request, issued by the host computer system, for the disk boot sector of the boot partition; and executing the loader means by the central processing unit (CPU) of the computer system in place of the requested disk boot sector, the loader sector transferring a code segment stored in the storage device (1) into a RAM of the CPU for execution thereon, the code segment, when executed, initiating a user interface procedure whereby a user may select a protection option from a selection of protection options; and whereupon, subsequent to a said selection having been made by the user, said code segment transfers the disk boot program stored in the disk boot sector as originally requested and, in turn, executes the disk boot program which then initiates operating system boot in the host computer system.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein said selection of protection options includes the option, by entering a predetermined password, of setting the storage device in "unsupervised mode" whereby interface requests are not intercepted by the supervising means.

28. A method according to claim 27, wherein the selection also includes the option of setting the storage device (1) in

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"supervised" mode and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any resident information stored in said at least one WMR partition by

5 updated information, the updated information is written on the storage medium (2) in a location other than where any resident information is stored and a pointer to the updated information is provided so that the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of a session.

10

29. A method according to claim 28, further including storing a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) which contains the pointers associated with each said WMR partition in the volatile RAM means (5) of the storage device (1).

15

30. A method according to claim 27, further including the option of setting the storage device (1) in "supervised" mode and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write

20 command is issued to overwrite any information stored said at least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition when required.

1/2

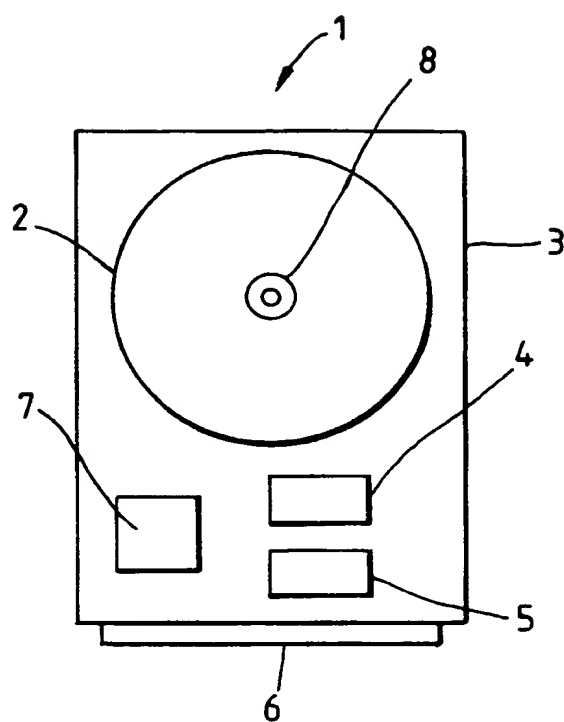


Fig. 1

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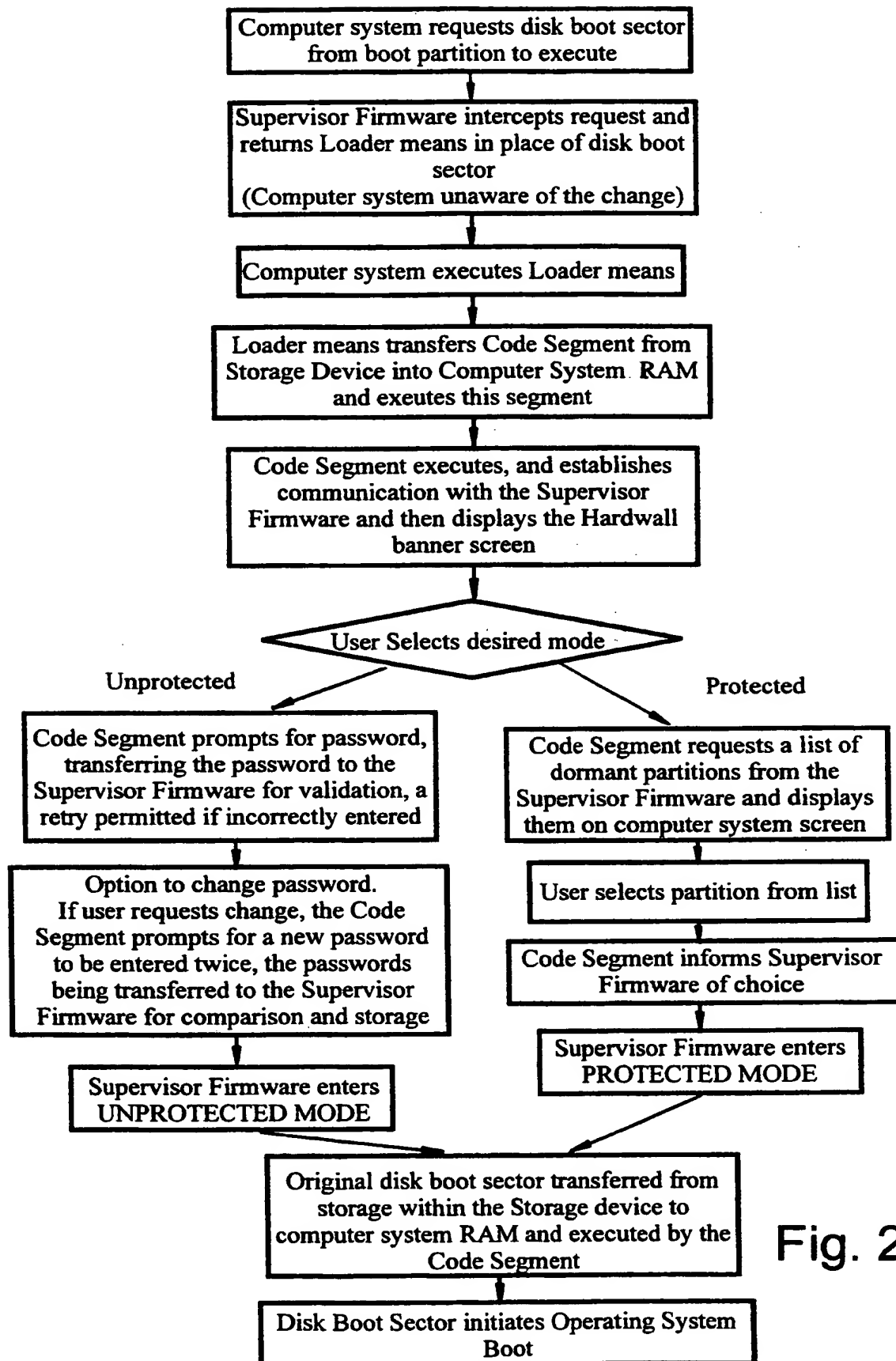


Fig. 2

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 99/01431

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**  
IPC 6 G06F1/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 G06F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 586 301 A (FISHERMAN IGOR ET AL) 17 December 1996 (1996-12-17)  figures 1,2,7,9,11 column 3, line 31 - column 6, line 9	2,4-6, 8-14,16, 17, 19-21, 24-26
A	WO 91 13403 A (RODIME PLC) 5 September 1991 (1991-09-05)  figure 1 page 5, line 3 - page 10, line 37	1-7, 11-21, 24-28

☐

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒

Patent family members are listed in annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

3 September 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

10/09/1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA

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Weiss, P



# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/GB 99/01431

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5586301 A	17-12-1996	AU 4129796 A	06-06-1996
		CA 2204860 A	23-05-1996
		EP 0792484 A	03-09-1997
		WO 9615486 A	23-05-1996
		US 5657470 A	12-08-1997
WO 9113403 A	05-09-1991	DE 69110665 D	27-07-1995
		DE 69110665 T	14-03-1996
		EP 0516682 A	09-12-1992
		US 5657473 A	12-08-1997

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CLAIMS

Replaced  
REPLACED BY  
ART 34 AMDT

27 NOV 00

1. A storage device (1) for a host computer system, the storage device comprising: storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing  
5 information; intelligent means (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means; and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device with the host computer system and via which information is transferred to and from the storage means under the control of  
10 said intelligent means,  
the storage means comprising: a storage medium (2) divided into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions; non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile  
15 random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);  
wherein supervising means is incorporated in said storage means for operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2).
- 20 2. A storage device according to claim 1, wherein the supervising means is provided as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM means (4) on the storage device (1).
3. A storage device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  
25 the intelligent means comprises a micro-controller (7) which runs the Supervisor firmware stored in the ROM means (4).
4. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein said non-overlapping partitions into which the storage medium  
30 (2) is divided include a boot partition and at least one general partition, each said partition being divided into a plurality of sectors.
5. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein  
35 the supervising means operates said intelligent means (7) so as to allow/restrict/prohibit read/write operations upon the

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storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition, and whether if the  
5 partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive.

6. A storage device according to claim 5, as dependent from claim 2, wherein the supervising means also ensures that  
10 firmware stored on the ROM means (4) of the storage device (1), which includes the firmware providing the supervisor means, is also protected in that a user, or a user program operating in the host computer system, does not have access to the ROM means (4) of the storage device itself.

15

7. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the supervising means is configured so as to cause a warning to be issued to the user should an attempt be made to perform a prohibited read, write or format operation.

20

8. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any information  
25 stored in the WMR partition the updated information is stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2), and a pointer to the updated information is provided so the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of the session, and wherein a system reset causes the pointer to the updated  
30 information to be cleared.

9. A storage device according to claim 8, wherein the or each said WMR partition has a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) associated therewith which is held in said volatile RAM means  
35 (5) of the storage device (1), and each entry in a said SRT is a pointer which defines the address of a range of sectors in

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the WMR partition that have been updated and an address where the updated information is located, this location being within a dedicated area on the storage medium (2) which is accessed only by the supervisor means.

5

10. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 7, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any  
10 information stored in said at least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition when required.

15 11. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the storage device (1) is provided with loader means and said supervising means is adapted to intercept any request for the disk boot sector, issued by the host computer system in use thereof, and supply said loader means to satisfy the request.

20

12. A storage device according to claim 11, wherein the loader means is configured to load or transfer a predetermined code segment, which is stored on the storage means (2), to a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer system to  
25 be executed by the computer system prior to operating system boot.

13. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein the loader means is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the  
30 storage device (1).

14. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein said loader means is provided in a reserved area on the storage medium (2), which reserved area is inaccessible to a user or  
35 user program.

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15. A storage device according to any of claims 12 to 14, wherein the code segment is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the storage device.

5 16. A storage device according to any of claims 12 to 14, wherein the code segment is provided in a reserved area of the storage medium (2) which is inaccessible to a user or user program, but is accessible to the supervising means, whereby unauthorised alteration of the code segment is prevented.

10

17. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the device may be placed in either "supervised" mode, in which the supervising means is active, or "unsupervised" mode in which the supervising means is not active.

15

18. A storage device according to claim 17, wherein said code segment, when executed, provides user prompts which allow a user to select either "supervised" mode, or by entry of a password select "unsupervised" mode, and the code segment is  
20 constructed such that, subsequent to mode selection by the user, the code segment transfers and executes the boot program from the disk boot sector of the storage medium (2) which, in turn, initiates operating system boot in the host computer system.

25 19. A storage device according to claim 12, wherein said storage device is a hard disk drive and the storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2), and said loader means is provided in at least one in one reserved track of said at least one disk platter (2).

30

20. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is a hard disk drive (1).

21. A storage device according to claim 20, wherein the  
35 storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2).

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22. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is a solid state storage device.

23. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 18, wherein the storage device is an optical storage device.

24. A computer system incorporating a storage (1) device according to any of claims 1 to 23.

10 25. A method of controlling access to and modification of information stored on a storage medium (2) of a storage device (1) for incorporation in a host computer system wherein the storage device comprises storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing information, intelligent means (7) for controlling the  
15 transfer of information to and from the storage means, and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device (1) with the host computer system and via which information may be transferred to and from the storage means under the control of said intelligent means, and the storage means comprises: a  
20 storage medium (2); non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);

the method comprising the steps of:

25 dividing the storage medium (2) into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions including a boot partition and at least one general partition, and dividing each said partition into a plurality of sectors;

providing supervising means in said storage means for  
30 operating said intelligent means (7) so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2); and incorporating the storage device in a host computer system, and running the host computer system with the supervising means operating said intelligent means so as to protect  
35 information stored in the storage medium.

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26. A method according to claim 25, wherein said supervising means is provided for allowing/restricting/prohibiting read/write operations upon the storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in a general partition, and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive, said supervising means being adapted to intercept each interface request from the host computer system to said storage device (1);

providing a loader means, said supervising means being adapted to supply said loader means in response to any request, issued by the host computer system, for the disk boot sector of the boot partition; and executing the loader means by the central processing unit (CPU) of the computer system in place of the requested disk boot sector, the loader sector transferring a code segment stored in the storage device (1) into a RAM of the CPU for execution thereon, the code segment, when executed, initiating a user interface procedure whereby a user may select a protection option from a selection of protection options;

and whereupon, subsequent to a said selection having been made by the user, said code segment transfers the disk boot program stored in the disk boot sector as originally requested and, in turn, executes the disk boot program which then initiates operating system boot in the host computer system.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein said selection of protection options includes the option, by entering a predetermined password, of setting the storage device in "unsupervised mode" whereby interface requests are not intercepted by the supervising means.

28. A method according to claim 27, wherein the selection also includes the option of setting the storage device (1) in

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"supervised" mode and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any resident information stored in said at least one WMR partition by  
5 updated information, the updated information is written on the storage medium (2) in a location other than where any resident information is stored and a pointer to the updated information is provided so that the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of a session.

10

29. A method according to claim 28, further including storing a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) which contains the pointers associated with each said WMR partition in the volatile RAM means (5) of the storage device (1).

15

30. A method according to claim 27, further including the option of setting the storage device (1) in "supervised" mode and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write  
20 command is issued to overwrite any information stored said at least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition when required.



## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

## PCT

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference <b>SK/P09165PC</b>	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. <b>PCT/GB 99/ 01431</b>	International filing date (day/month/year) <b>07/05/1999</b>	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) <b>09/05/1998</b>
Applicant <b>VIRCON LIMITED et al.</b>		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 2 sheets.



It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

**1. Basis of the report**

- a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.



the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

- b. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:



contained in the international application in written form.



filed together with the international application in computer readable form.



furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.



furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.



the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.



the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. ☐ **Certain claims were found unsearchable** (See Box I).

3. ☐ **Unity of invention is lacking** (see Box II).

**4. With regard to the title,**

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.



the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

**5. With regard to the abstract,**

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.



the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 2



None of the figures.



as suggested by the applicant.



because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.



because this figure better characterizes the invention.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 99/01431

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 6 G06F1/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 G06F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 586 301 A (FISHERMAN IGOR ET AL) 17 December 1996 (1996-12-17)  figures 1,2,7,9,11 column 3, line 31 - column 6, line 9 ---	2,4-6, 8-14,16, 17, 19-21, 24-26
A	WO 91 13403 A (RODIME PLC) 5 September 1991 (1991-09-05)  figure 1 page 5, line 3 - page 10, line 37 -----	1-7, 11-21, 24-28

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

## \* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&amp;" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

3 September 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

10/09/1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2  
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,  
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Authorized officer

Weiss, P

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/GB 99/01431

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5586301 A	17-12-1996	AU 4129796 A	06-06-1996
		CA 2204860 A	23-05-1996
		EP 0792484 A	03-09-1997
		WO 9615486 A	23-05-1996
		US 5657470 A	12-08-1997
WO 9113403 A	05-09-1991	DE 69110665 D	27-07-1995
		DE 69110665 T	14-03-1996
		EP 0516682 A	09-12-1992
		US 5657473 A	12-08-1997

PTG/PCT Rec'd 27 NOV 2000

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference SK/LD/P09165PC	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB99/01431	International filing date (day/month/year) 07/05/1999	Priority date (day/month/year) 09/05/1998
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G06F1/00		
Applicant VIRCON LIMITED et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.


2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

- ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 8 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☒ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand  06/11/1999	Date of completion of this report  31.08.2000
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized officer  Van de Maele, L  Telephone No. +49 89 2399 8805



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB99/01431

**I. Basis of the report**

1. This report has been drawn on the basis of (*substitute sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to the report since they do not contain amendments.*):

**Description, pages:**

1-20 as originally filed

**Claims, No.:**

1-28 with telefax of 22/05/2000

**Drawings, sheets:**

1/2,2/2 as originally filed

2. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:  
☐ the claims, Nos.:  
☐ the drawings, sheets:

3. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

4. Additional observations, if necessary:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB99/01431

---

**V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims 1-28
	No: Claims
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims 1-28
	No: Claims
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims 1-28
	No: Claims

**2. Citations and explanations**

**see separate sheet**

**VII. Certain defects in the international application**

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

**see separate sheet**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

---

International application No. PCT/GB99/01431

**ANNEX TO SECTION VII**

1. Independent claims are not drafted in the two-part form as required by **Rule 6.3(b) PCT**.

# PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

## PCT

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### INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference SK/LD/P09165PC	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB99/01431	International filing date (day/month/year) 07/05/1999	Priority date (day/month/year) 09/05/1998
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G06F1/00		
Applicant VIRCON LIMITED et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.


2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

- ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 8 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☒ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand  06/11/1999	Date of completion of this report  31.08.2000
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:   European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized officer  Van de Maele, L  Telephone No. +49 89 2399 8805





**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB99/01431

**I. Basis of the report**

1. This report has been drawn on the basis of (*substitute sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to the report since they do not contain amendments.*):

**Description, pages:**

1-20 as originally filed

**Claims, No.:**

1-28 with telefax of 22/05/2000

**Drawings, sheets:**

1/2,2/2 as originally filed

2. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:  
☐ the claims, Nos.:  
☐ the drawings, sheets:

3. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

4. Additional observations, if necessary:

# INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/GB99/01431

## V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

### 1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-28
	No:	Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	1-28
	No:	Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes:	Claims	1-28
	No:	Claims	

### 2. Citations and explanations

**see separate sheet**

## VII. Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

**see separate sheet**

**ANNEX TO SECTION VII**

1. Independent claims are not drafted in the two-part form as required by **Rule 6.3(b) PCT**.

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CLAIMS

1. A storage device (1) for a host computer system, the storage device comprising: storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing information; intelligent means (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means; and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device with the host computer system and via which information is transferred to and from the storage means under the control of said intelligent means,

the storage means comprising: a storage medium (2) divided into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions including a boot partition and at least one general partition, each said partition being divided into a plurality of sectors, the boot partition including a boot sector containing code for use by the host computer system to perform operating system boot of the host computer system; non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);

wherein supervising means is incorporated in said storage means for operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2), said supervising means being incorporated at least partly as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM means (4), and wherein the storage device further includes:

a host executable code segment, stored in said storage means, for allowing user control of the supervising means via the host computer system and for controlling initiation of operating system boot in the host computer system; and loader means stored in the storage means and comprising host executable code for loading said code segment to the host computer system and causing the host computer system to execute the loaded code segment;

and wherein said supervising firmware stored in the ROM means (4) is adapted to intercept any request for said boot sector,

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issued by the host computer system in use thereof, and to supply said loader means to the host computer system to satisfy the request.

5 2. A storage device according to claim 1, wherein the supervising means is provided wholly as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM means (4) on the storage device (1).

10 3. A storage device according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the intelligent means comprises a micro-controller (7) which runs the supervising firmware stored in the ROM means (4).

4. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein  
15 the supervising means operates said intelligent means (7) so as to allow/restrict/prohibit read/write operations upon the storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the  
20 boot partition or in a general partition, and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive.

5. A storage device according to claim 4, wherein the  
25 supervising means also ensures that firmware stored on the ROM means (4) of the storage device (1), which includes the supervisor firmware, is also protected in that a user, or a user program operating in the host computer system, does not have access to the ROM means (4) of the storage device itself.

30

6. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the supervising means is configured so as to cause a warning to be issued to the user should an attempt be made to perform a prohibited read, write or format operation.

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7. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any information stored in the WMR partition the updated information is stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2), and a pointer to the updated information is provided so the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of the session, and wherein a system reset causes the pointer to the updated information to be cleared.

8. A storage device according to claim 7, wherein the or each said WMR partition has a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) associated therewith which is held in said volatile RAM means (5) of the storage device (1), and each entry in a said SRT is a pointer which defines the address of a range of sectors in the WMR partition that have been updated and an address where the updated information is located, this location being within a dedicated area on the storage medium (2) which is accessed only by the supervisor means.

9. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 6, wherein at least one of said partitions of the storage device (1) comprises a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any information stored in said at least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition when required.

30

10. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein the loader means is configured to load said code segment to a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer system for execution by the host computer system prior to operating system boot.

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11. A storage device according to claim 10, wherein the loader means is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the storage device (1).

5 12. A storage device according to claim 10, wherein said loader means is provided in a reserved area on the storage medium (2), which reserved area is inaccessible to a user or user program.

10 13. A storage device according to any of claims 10 to 12, wherein the code segment is provided in said non-volatile ROM means (4) of the storage device.

14. A storage device according to any of claims 12 to 14,  
15 wherein the code segment is provided in a reserved area of the storage medium (2) which is inaccessible to a user or user program, but is accessible to the supervising means, whereby unauthorised alteration of the code segment is prevented.

20 15. A storage device according to any preceding claim, wherein said host executable code segment comprises code for enabling the storage device to be set in either "supervised" mode, in which the supervising means is active, or "unsupervised" mode in which the supervising means is not active.

25

16. A storage device according to claim 15, wherein said code segment, when executed, provides user prompts which allow a user to select said "supervised" mode, or by entry of a password select said "unsupervised" mode, and the code segment  
30 is constructed such that, subsequent to mode selection by the user, the code segment transfers a boot program from the boot sector of the storage medium (2) and causes the host computer system to execute said boot program so as to initiate operating system boot in the host computer system.

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17. A storage device according to claim 10, wherein said storage device is a hard disk drive and the storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2), and said loader means is provided in at least one reserved track of said at least one disk platter (2).

18. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 16, wherein the storage device is a hard disk drive (1).

19. A storage device according to claim 18, wherein the storage medium comprises at least one disk platter (2).

20. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 16, wherein the storage device is a solid state storage device.

15

21. A storage device according to any of claims 1 to 16, wherein the storage device is an optical storage device.

22. A computer system incorporating a storage (1) device according to any of claims 1 to 21.

23. A method of controlling access to and modification of information stored on a storage medium (2) of a storage device (1) for incorporation in a host computer system wherein the storage device comprises storage means (2, 4, 5) for storing information, intelligent means (7) for controlling the transfer of information to and from the storage means, and interfacing means (6) for interfacing the storage device (1) with the host computer system and via which information may be transferred to and from the storage means under the control of said intelligent means, and the storage means comprises: a storage medium (2); non-volatile read-only-memory (ROM) means (4) for storing firmware for controlling operation of the storage device; and volatile random-access-memory (RAM) means (5);

the method comprising the steps of:

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dividing the storage medium (2) into a plurality of non-overlapping partitions including a boot partition and at least one general partition, and dividing each said partition into a plurality of sectors, the boot partition including a boot  
5 sector containing code for use by the host computer system to perform operating system boot of the host computer system; providing supervising means in said storage means for operating said intelligent means (7) so as to protect information stored in the storage medium (2), said supervising  
10 means being incorporated at least partly as firmware which is stored in said non-volatile ROM means (4); storing in said storage means a host executable code segment for allowing user control of the supervising means via the host computer system and for controlling initiation of  
15 operating system boot in the host computer system; storing in the storage means loader means comprising host executable code for loading said code segment to the host computer system and causing the host computer system to execute the loaded code segment;  
20 said supervising firmware stored in the ROM means (4) being adapted to intercept any request for said boot sector, issued by the host computer system, and to supply said loader means in response to the request; and incorporating the storage device in a host computer system, and running the host  
25 computer system with the supervising means operating said intelligent means so as to protect information stored in the storage medium.

24. A method according to claim 23, wherein said supervising  
30 means is provided for allowing/restricting/prohibiting read/write operations upon the storage medium (2) depending upon whether information to be read from a sector or written to a sector is operating system information or user information, whether the sector is in the boot partition or in  
35 a general partition, and whether if the partition is a general partition the partition is active or inactive,

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said supervising means being adapted to intercept each interface request from the host computer system to said storage device (1);

and the loader means loads said code segment to a RAM of a central processing unit (CPU) of the host computer system for execution by the host computer system prior to operating system boot,

and the code segment, when executed, initiates a user interface procedure whereby a user may select a protection option from a selection of protection options;

and whereupon, subsequent to a said selection having been made by the user, said code segment transfers a boot program from the boot sector of the storage medium (2) and causes the host computer system to execute said boot program so as to initiate operating system boot in the host computer system.

25. A method according to claim 24, wherein said selection of protection options includes the option, by entering a predetermined password, of setting the storage device in "unsupervised mode" whereby interface requests are not intercepted by the supervising means.

26. A method according to claim 25, wherein the selection also includes the option of setting the storage device (1) in "supervised" mode and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write command is issued to overwrite any resident information stored in said at least one WMR partition by updated information, the updated information is written on the storage medium (2) in a location other than where any resident information is stored and a pointer to the updated information is provided so that the updated information can be accessed as required during the remainder of a session.

27. A method according to claim 26, further including storing a Sector Relocation Table (SRT) which contains the pointers

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associated with each said WMR partition in the volatile RAM means (5) of the storage device (1).

28. A method according to claim 25, further including the  
5 option of setting the storage device (1) in "supervised" mode  
and designating at least one of said partitions a Write Many  
Recoverable (WMR) partition wherein, in use, if a write  
command is issued to overwrite any information stored said at  
least one WMR partition, prior to undertaking said write  
10 command said information is copied and stored elsewhere on the  
storage medium (2) to be copied back to said WMR partition  
when required.

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# PCT

**PTO/PCT Rec'd 7 NOV 2000**

## REQUEST

The undersigned requests that the present international application be processed according to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.

For receiving Office use only

International Application No.

International Filing Date

Name of receiving Office and "PCT International Application"

Applicant's or agent's file reference  
(if desired) (12 characters maximum) SK/P09165PC

### Box No. I TITLE OF INVENTION

PROTECTED STORAGE DEVICE FOR COMPUTER SYSTEM

### Box No. II APPLICANT

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

Vircon Limited  
Level 2, Saltire Court  
20 Castle Terrace  
Edinburgh, EH1 2ET

☐ This person is also inventor.

Telephone No.

Facsimile No.

Teleprinter No.

State (that is, country) of nationality:

UNITED KINGDOM (GB)

State (that is, country) of residence:

UNITED KINGDOM (GB)

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

☐

all designated States

☒

all designated States except the United States of America

☐

the United States of America only

☐

the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

### Box No. III FURTHER APPLICANT(S) AND/OR (FURTHER) INVENTOR(S)

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

ROBB, David Shepherd Stewart  
22 Lumsden Park  
Cupar  
Fife, KY15 5YL  
United Kingdom

This person is:

☐ applicant only

☒ applicant and inventor

☐ inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)

State (that is, country) of nationality:

UNITED KINGDOM (GB)

State (that is, country) of residence:

UNITED KINGDOM (GB)

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

☐

all designated States

☐

all designated States except the United States of America

☒

the United States of America only

☐

the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

☒ Further applicants and/or (further) inventors are indicated on a continuation sheet.

### Box No. IV AGENT OR COMMON REPRESENTATIVE; OR ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

The person identified below is hereby/has been appointed to act on behalf of the applicant(s) before the competent International Authorities as:

☒

agent

☐

common representative

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country.)

McCALLUM, William Potter; MacDOUGALL, Donald Carmichael; SZCZUKA, Jan Tymoteusz; NAISMITH, Robert Stewart; HORNER, Martin Grenville; SHANKS, Andrew; NEWELL, Campbell; KERR, Sheila Agnes Fife; MORELAND, David; GODWIN, Edgar James; all of CRUIKSHANK & FAIRWEATHER, 19 ROYAL EXCHANGE SQUARE, GLASGOW, G1 3AE, UNITED KINGDOM (GB)

Telephone No.

0141 221 5767

Facsimile No.

0141 221 7739

Teleprinter No.

☐ Address for correspondence: Mark this check-box where no agent or common representative is/has been appointed and the space above is used instead to indicate a special address to which correspondence should be sent.

## Continuation of Box No. III FURTHER APPLICANTS AND/OR (FURTHER) INVENTORS

If none of the following sub-boxes is used, this sheet should not be included in the request.

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

LEITCH, Victor Andrew  
Lusta  
Carslogie Road  
Cupar  
Fife, KY15 4HY  
United Kingdom

This person is:

- ☐ applicant only  
☒ applicant and inventor  
☐ inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)

State (that is, country) of nationality: United Kingdom

State (that is, country) of residence: United Kingdom

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

- ☐ all designated States ☐ all designated States except the United States of America ☒ the United States of America only ☐ the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

BAILIE, Richard Samuel  
28 Ferryfield  
Cupar  
Fife, KY15 5DG  
United Kingdom

This person is:

- ☐ applicant only  
☒ applicant and inventor  
☐ inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)

State (that is, country) of nationality: United Kingdom

State (that is, country) of residence: United Kingdom

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

- ☐ all designated States ☐ all designated States except the United States of America ☒ the United States of America only ☐ the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

This person is:

- ☐ applicant only  
☐ applicant and inventor  
☐ inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)

State (that is, country) of nationality:

State (that is, country) of residence:

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

- ☐ all designated States ☐ all designated States except the United States of America ☐ the United States of America only ☐ the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

Name and address: (Family name followed by given name; for a legal entity, full official designation. The address must include postal code and name of country. The country of the address indicated in this Box is the applicant's State (that is, country) of residence if no State of residence is indicated below.)

This person is:

- ☐ applicant only  
☐ applicant and inventor  
☐ inventor only (If this check-box is marked, do not fill in below.)

State (that is, country) of nationality:

State (that is, country) of residence:

This person is applicant for the purposes of:

- ☐ all designated States ☐ all designated States except the United States of America ☐ the United States of America only ☐ the States indicated in the Supplemental Box

☐ Further applicants and/or (further) inventors are indicated on another continuation sheet.

**Box No.V DESIGNATION OF STATES**

The following designations are hereby made under Rule 4.9(a) (mark the applicable check-boxes; at least one must be marked):

**Regional Patent**

- ☐ **AP ARIPO Patent:** GH Ghana, GM Gambia, KE Kenya, LS Lesotho, MW Malawi, SD Sudan, SZ Swaziland, UG Uganda, ZW Zimbabwe, and any other State which is a Contracting State of the Harare Protocol and of the PCT
- ☐ **EA Eurasian Patent:** AM Armenia, AZ Azerbaijan, BY Belarus, KG Kyrgyzstan, KZ Kazakhstan, MD Republic of Moldova, RU Russian Federation, TJ Tajikistan, TM Turkmenistan, and any other State which is a Contracting State of the Eurasian Patent Convention and of the PCT
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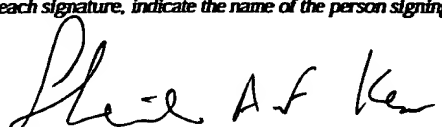
<b>Box No. VI PRIORITY CLAIM</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Further priority claims are indicated in the Supplemental Box.		
Filing date of earlier application (day/month/year)	Number of earlier application	Where earlier application is:		
		national application: country	regional application:* regional Office	international application: receiving Office
item (1) 09 May 1998	9809885.8	United Kingdom		
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<b>Box No. VIII CHECK LIST; LANGUAGE OF FILING</b>	
This international application contains the following number of sheets: request : 4 description (excluding sequence listing part) : 20 claims : 7 abstract : 1 drawings : 2 sequence listing part of description : 0 Total number of sheets : 34	This international application is accompanied by the item(s) marked below: 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fee calculation sheet 2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> separate signed power of attorney (x4 to follow) 3. <input type="checkbox"/> copy of general power of attorney; reference number, if any: 4. <input type="checkbox"/> statement explaining lack of signature 5. <input type="checkbox"/> priority document(s) identified in Box No. VI as item(s): 6. <input type="checkbox"/> translation of international application into (language): 7. <input type="checkbox"/> separate indications concerning deposited microorganism or other biological material 8. <input type="checkbox"/> nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing in computer readable form 9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify): PF 23/77
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10 December 1999 (10.12.99)

International application No.

PCT/GB99/01431

Applicant's or agent's file reference

SK/P09165PC

International filing date (day/month/year)

07 May 1999 (07.05.99)

Priority date (day/month/year)

09 May 1998 (09.05.98)

Applicant

ROBB, David, Shepherd, Stewart et al

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:

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